The UGC also provides a one-time 'Seed Money' of Rs. 5.00 lakhs, to the select colleges in the humanities and Commerce stream and of Rs. 7.00 lakhs in Science streams.

Special package for SC/ST children

2032. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NCERT has discussed the problems of SC/ST children for attaining social justice in education, especially to control their higher dropout rate;

(b) if so, whether the Tata Institute of Social Sciences' National Curriculum Framework is considering the educational realities of SC/ST children; and

(c) if so, whether a similar study is also being conducted pertaining to tribal children or any special package is being prepared for them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) to (c) The central focus in the educational development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in their equalization with the non-Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population in all stages and levels of education. The National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) has conducted several State specific studies, covering factors which hamper their retention in schools, identification of attitudinal issues among teachers, curricular practices, which result in non-comprehension. It has also conducted orientation/ training programmes for teachers and educational functionaries concerned with the education of SC/ST children. It has also set up 21 Focus Groups to look into all aspects of education.

The Focus Group on Problems of SC/ST children has been set up under the chairpersonship of Dr. Padma Velaskar of Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. This Focus Group has presented a tentative draft, containing recommendations on equitable provision in terms of availability of schooling at different levels of education, adequacy of educational infrastructure, teaching learning material, etc. It emphasizes critical thinking, social and emotional development, creative and productive skills, dignity of labour underlined by values of equality, social justice, etc. The National Curriculam Framework for School Education (NCFSE), which is presently under review by the NCERT will give due weightage on all these aspects at the time of its finalization.